

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Questech Metals

Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center

Questech Metals Celebrates Impact of Lean Manufacturing on Overall Operations

Client Profile:

Questech Metals, located in Middlebury and Rutland, Vermont, manufactures decorative tiles. The company has been in business 14 years and employs 50 people.

Situation:

Questech Metals produces a distinctive decorative tile that is highly sought after for both new construction and remodeling. The company has enjoyed consistent, steady growth and sales are continuing to increase. The Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center (VMEC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, was asked to work with company personnel to evaluate opportunities for improved processes both in the front office and on the shop floor.

Solution:

VMEC provided lean training to Questech Metals. Using the process of Value Stream Mapping, the Questech team mapped their current state, identified opportunities for change, and developed their future state map. Implementation teams worked on various projects, such as set up reduction, materials usage, work in process levels, finished goods inventory and SKU mix levels, and standardized work/work sequences throughout the company. VMEC helped to train, guide and support Questech personnel to use lean tools to their fullest.

Results:

- * Achieved a more competitive and profitable position.
- * Reduced start-up time on production equipment by 50 to 75 percent.
- * Reduced volume of hazardous waste at savings of \$200 daily.
- * Increased quality of product.
- * Reduced lead-time by 50 percent.
- * Increased throughput.
- * Reduced finished goods inventory by 40 percent.

Testimonial:

"Going through this process we learned a different way to look at our business as a whole. The most immediate effect was that it freed up a lot of cash for us. But more than that, now that we have started our transition we know exactly how we need to change our relationships with our suppliers and our customers so everyone benefits. It's the next logical step for a company which is growing as fast as we are."

Paul Laderoute, CFO/VP Finance

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field